

IDW

33

COVER A

SONIC™

THE HEDGEHOG



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GO
SEGA



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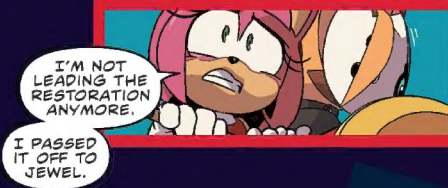


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STORY SO FAR





SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

The Blue Blur.
Fastest Thing Alive.



AMY ROSE

Adventure-ready heroine.
The chaperone.



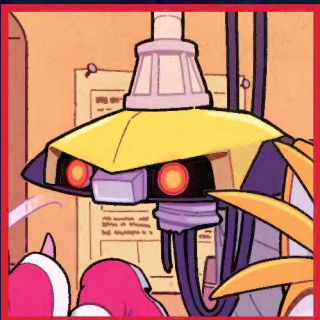
MILES "TAILS" PROWER

Boy genius.
The brains.



ROUGE THE BAT

Treasure-loving spy.
The swindler.



E-123 OMEGA

Damaged robot.
Stuck in a bag.



CREAM THE RABBIT

Compassionate heroine.
The cutest thing alive.



CHEESE

Excitable chao.
The tiny sidekick.



GEMERL

Reformed Robot.
The muscle.



WHERE DID YOU SAY YOU GOT THIS?

IT'S A SOUVENIR FROM MY TOUR OF THE FACESHIP, DIRECT FROM DR. EGGMAN'S PERSONAL FILES.

OUTSIDE TAILS' WORKSHOP...



REMARKABLE.

I WAS HOPING THEY'D MAKE SOME SENSE TO YOU, MR. BOY GENIUS.



PHEW! THAT'S THE LAST OF IT... GUESS I CAN SKIP MY BOXERCISE WORKOUT TODAY. SO, D'YA THINK YOU CAN FIX HIM?

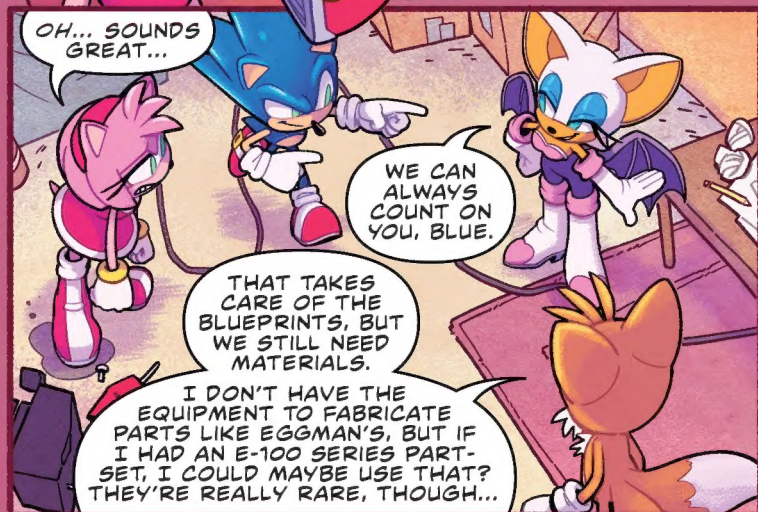
THANKS, AMY. AND I'M NOT SURE... EGGMAN WROTE THIS IN CODE.

WITHOUT THE CIPHER, IT'S GIBBERISH!



BESIDES, EVEN IF I COULD READ IT, OMEGA'S WAY BEYOND A SIMPLE TUNE-UP*. THIS IS GONNA BE A FULL REBUILD...

*SEE STH #32--EDS.



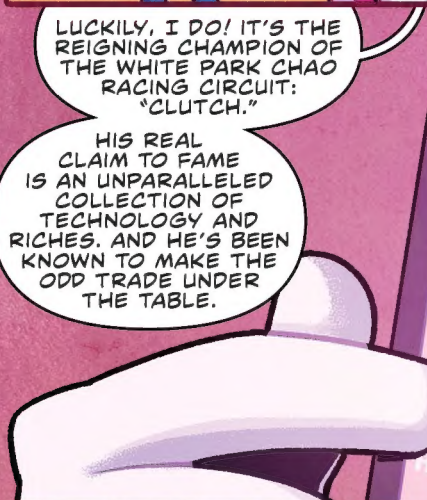


I'VE HAD MY EYE ON THIS MARK FOR A WHILE.

WHITE PARK? THE ROLLERCOASTER PLACE?

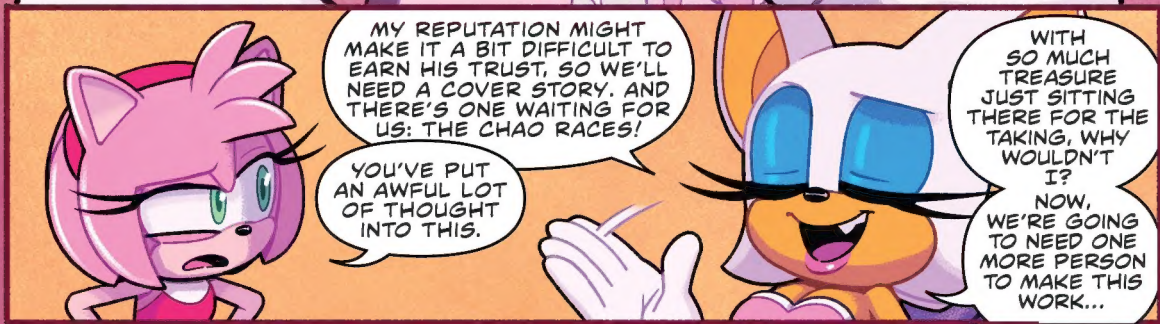
THAT'S JUST THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG.

WHITE PARK IS THE PLACE TO FIND RARE GOODS, INCLUDING SALVAGED EGGMAN TECH... IF YOU KNOW WHO TO TALK TO.



LUCKILY, I DO! IT'S THE REIGNING CHAMPION OF THE WHITE PARK CHAO RACING CIRCUIT: "CLUTCH."

HIS REAL CLAIM TO FAME IS AN UNPARALLELED COLLECTION OF TECHNOLOGY AND RICHES. AND HE'S BEEN KNOWN TO MAKE THE ODD TRADE UNDER THE TABLE.

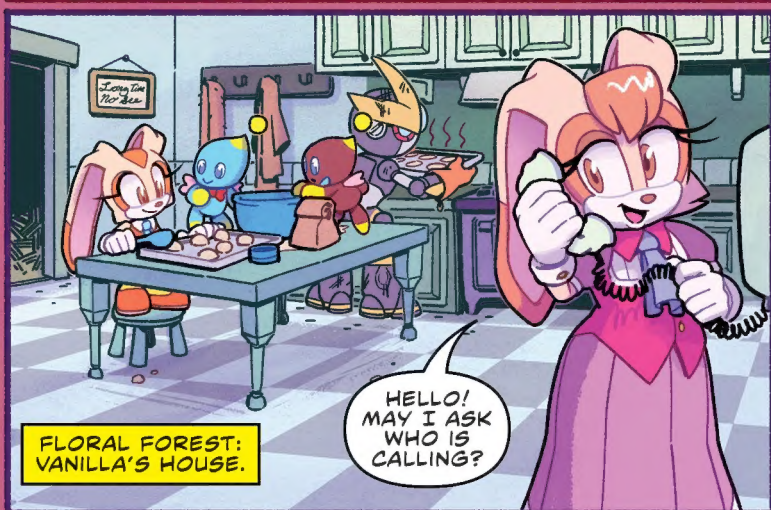


MY REPUTATION MIGHT MAKE IT A BIT DIFFICULT TO EARN HIS TRUST, SO WE'LL NEED A COVER STORY. AND THERE'S ONE WAITING FOR US: THE CHAO RACES!

YOU'VE PUT AN AWFUL LOT OF THOUGHT INTO THIS.

WITH SO MUCH TREASURE JUST SITTING THERE FOR THE TAKING, WHY WOULDN'T I?

NOW, WE'RE GOING TO NEED ONE MORE PERSON TO MAKE THIS WORK...



FLORAL FOREST: VANILLA'S HOUSE.

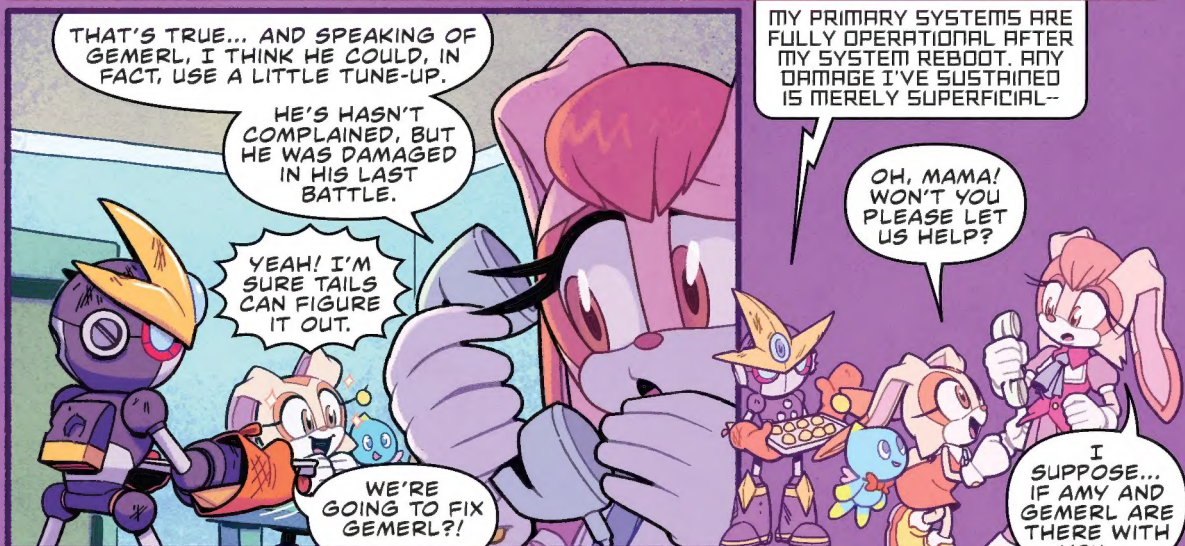
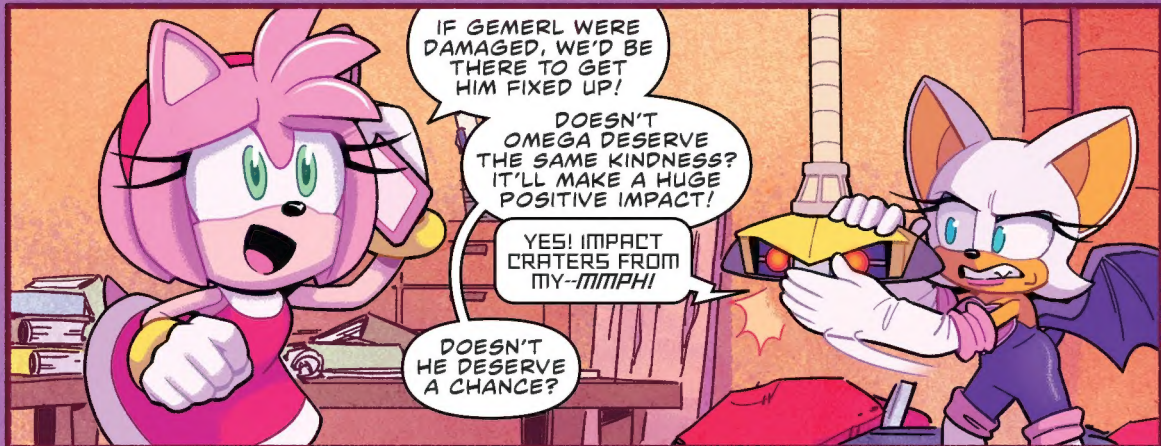
HELLO! MAY I ASK WHO IS CALLING?



ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?

YOU'RE STILL WELCOME TO JOIN THE BOYS IN THAT DARK, DARK ABANDONED LAIR.

...FAIR ENOUGH.



THE FOREST, NEAR
WINDMILL VILLAGE.

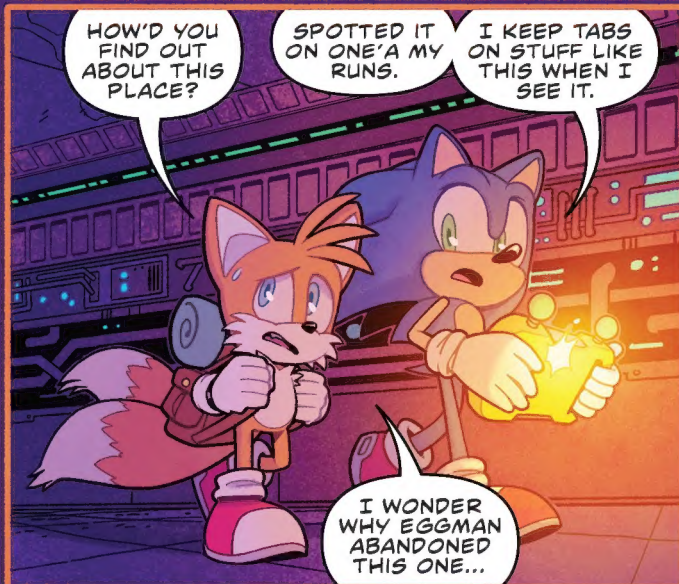
"...YOU KNOW HOW
DANGEROUS THESE
ADVENTURES CAN BE!"



HOW'D YOU
FIND OUT
ABOUT THIS
PLACE?

SPOTTED IT
ON ONE'A MY
RUNS.

I KEEP TABS
ON STUFF LIKE
THIS WHEN I
SEE IT.



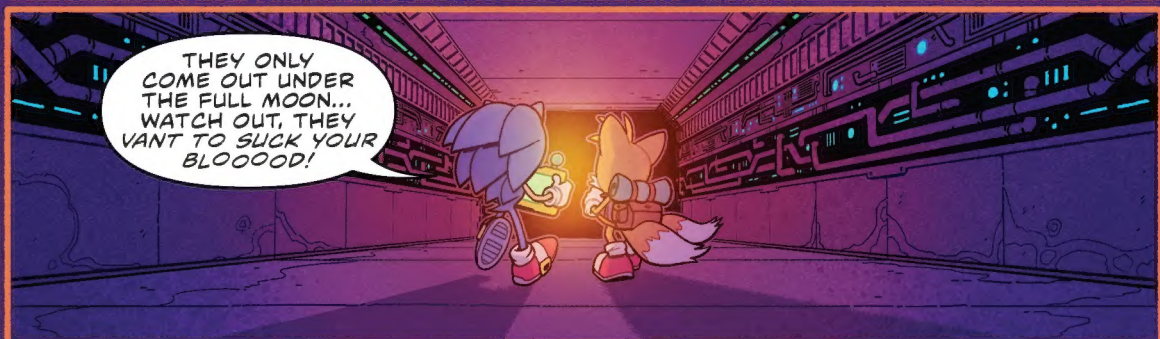
I WONDER
WHY EGGMAN
ABANDONED
THIS ONE...

MAYBE IT WAS
TAKEN OVER
BY GHOST
BADNIKS!

AH,
STOP IT!

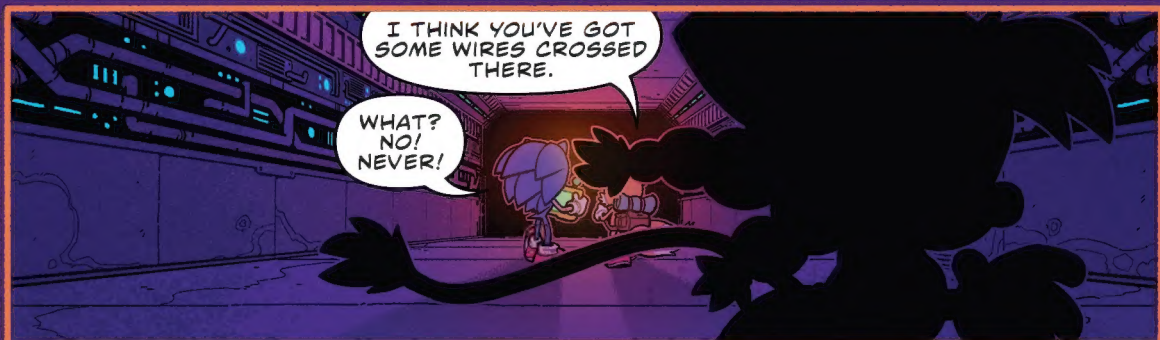


THEY ONLY
COME OUT UNDER
THE FULL MOON...
WATCH OUT, THEY
VANT TO SUCK YOUR
BLOOOD!



I THINK YOU'VE GOT
SOME WIRES CROSSED
THERE.

WHAT?
NO!
NEVER!





AHA, THERE'S ONE!

UMPH-- ONE WHAT?

A COMPUTER TERMINAL!

ONCE WE GET SOME BACKUP POWER GOING, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO ACCESS THE EGGNET FROM HERE.

SLAM



YEEESH. I TAKE IT BACK ABOUT THE GHOST BADNIKS, THIS IS PLENTY CREEPY AS-IS.



AT LEAST WE'LL HAVE COMPANY...

MEANWHILE...

THERE IT IS--WHITE PARK!

WOW, IT'S SO PRETTY!

BREATHTAKING VIEWS, LUXURY ACCOMODATIONS, AND A SECRET TREASURE HOARD WAITING TO BE FOUND... WHAT MORE COULD A GIRL ASK FOR?



I KNOW THIS ISN'T TECHNICALLY A VACATION, BUT IT'S A NICE CHANGE AFTER ALL THAT TIME PUSHING PAPERS AT RESTORATION HQ...

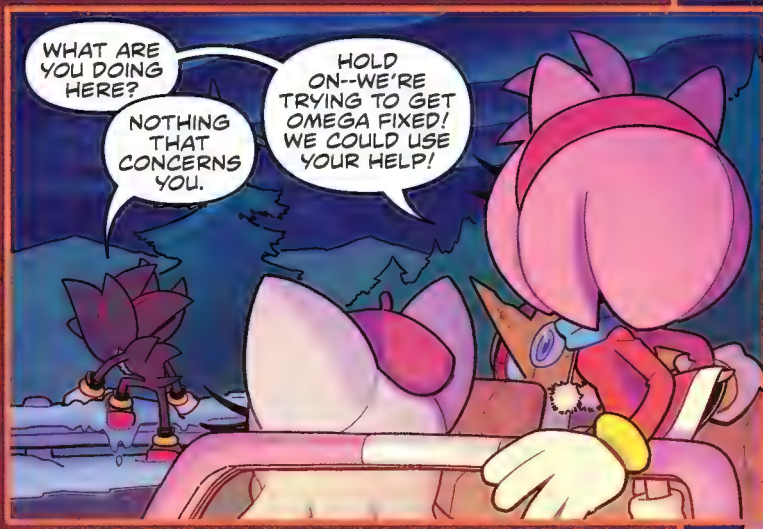


WHUH--SHADOW?!

HOW 'BOUT THAT? HEY THERE, HANDSOME.



TCH--TYPICAL.



WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

NOTHING THAT CONCERNS YOU.

HOLD ON--WE'RE TRYING TO GET OMEGA FIXED! WE COULD USE YOUR HELP!



...NOT INTERESTED.

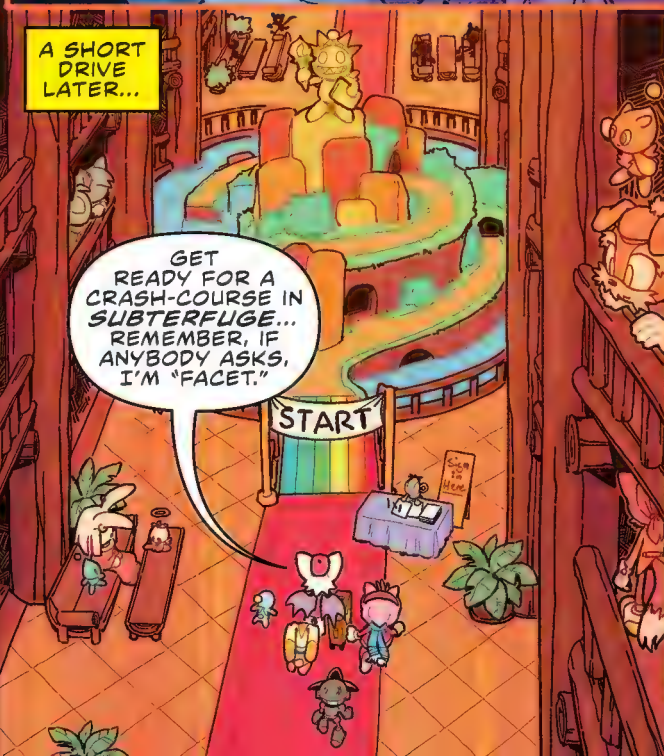


UGH! WHY'S HE GOTTA BE SUCH A GRUMP?

DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY... THAT WAS POLITE, FOR HIM.



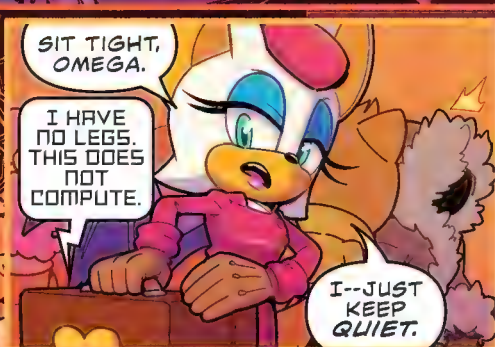
BBBBS SOMETHING TELLS ME WE'LL BE SEEING HIM AGAIN.



A SHORT DRIVE LATER...

GET READY FOR A CRASH-COURSE IN SUBTERFUGE... REMEMBER, IF ANYBODY ASKS, I'M "FACET."

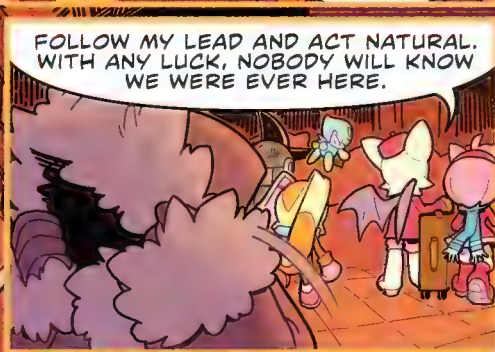
START



SIT TIGHT, OMEGA.

I HAVE NO LEGS. THIS DOES NOT COMPUTE.

I--JUST KEEP QUIET.



FOLLOW MY LEAD AND ACT NATURAL. WITH ANY LUCK, NOBODY WILL KNOW WE WERE EVER HERE.



ATTENTION,
CHATEAU
GUESTS!

OMOCHAO
SPEAKING, I'LL BE YOUR
EMCEE FOR TODAY'S
EVENT!

THE GRAND PRIX
QUALIFICATION RACE
WILL BE BEGINNING
SOON.

IF YOU WISH
TO COMPETE,
PLEASE
REGISTER
YOUR CHAO
IMMEDIATELY!



BETTER
GET YOU
TWO SIGNED
UP!

I'LL FIND
US A GOOD
SPOT TO WATCH
FROM!



EXCUSE ME, THIS DEAR
LITTLE GIRL IS SO EXCITED
TO ENTER THE RACE, SHE
SIMPLY CANNOT WAIT!
DO YOU MIND IF WE...?

AREN'T
YOU THE
CUTEST--
SURE!



THIS YOUNG
LADY WOULD
LIKE TO ENTER
HER CHAO IN
THE RACE.

I'M SORRY, WE
DON'T ALLOW
CHILDREN
TO RACE.

A-HA-HA...
I MEAN, I'M
THE YOUNG
LADY!



OF
COURSE!
SIGN HERE,
PLEASE!

CHATEAU
GUESTS, THE
QUALIFICATION
RACE IS ABOUT
TO BEGIN!



THE FIRST
50 CHAO TO
CROSS THE
FINISH LINE
WILL BE
ENTERED IN
OUR GRAND PRIX,
STARTING
TOMORROW.

GOOD
LUCK, AND
HAPPY
RACING!

GOOD LUCK,
CHEESE!



MS. ROUGE, WHY DID YOU LIE? IT'S NOT NICE TO NOT TELL THE TRUTH!

THAT'S "MS. FACET," AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

AH! LOOK, THERE'S CHEESE!

PREDISPOSITION TOWARDS DECEPTION: NOTED.

A LITTLE WHITE LIE WON'T HURT THEM.

YOU'RE NO FUN.



HEADS UP, THERE'S OUR MAN...

CLUTCH?

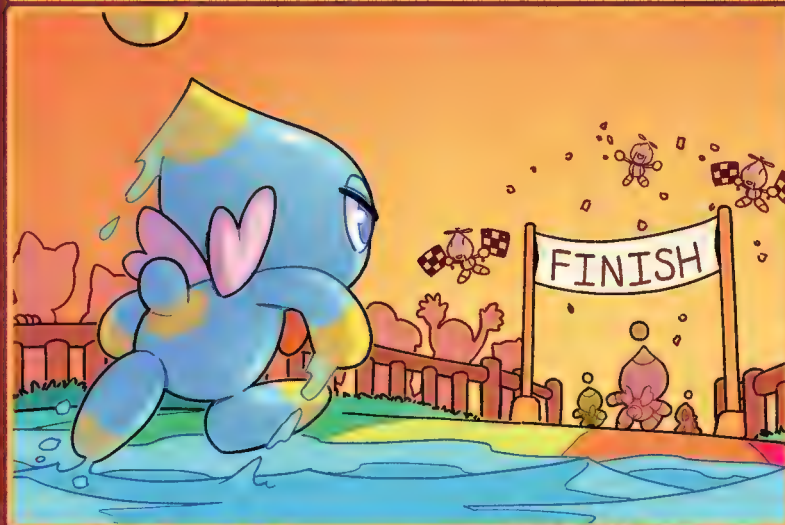
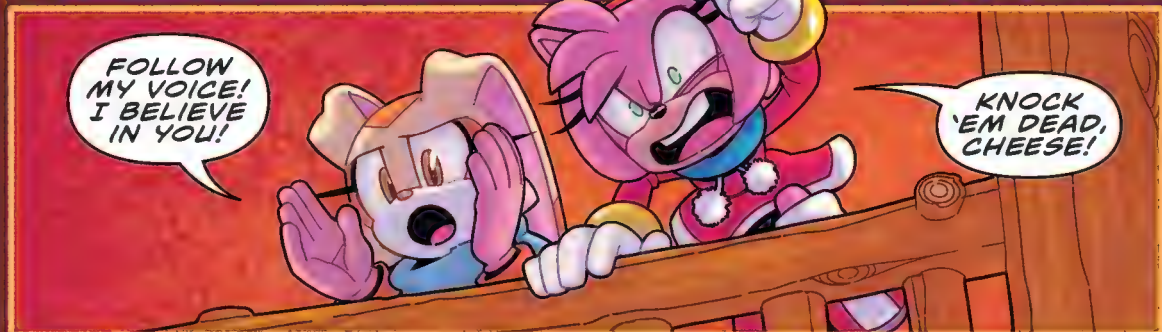
IF THE DESCRIPTIONS I'VE HEARD ARE TO BE BELIEVED, THOUGH I WASN'T PREPARED FOR QUITE SO MUCH HAIR.



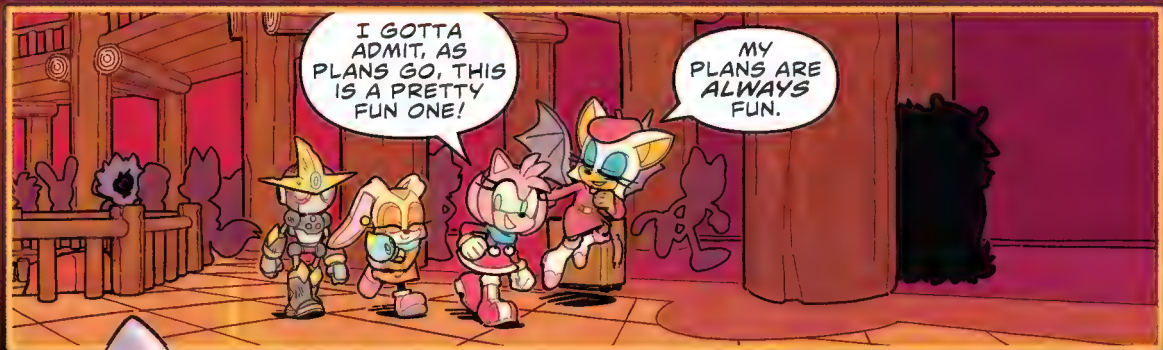
FWEEET

CHAOOH!











AND THAT'S HOW YOU GET THINGS DONE!

SEEMS A LITTLE TOO EASY TO ME.

OH, HE'S GOT SOMETHING UP HIS SLEEVE FOR SURE.

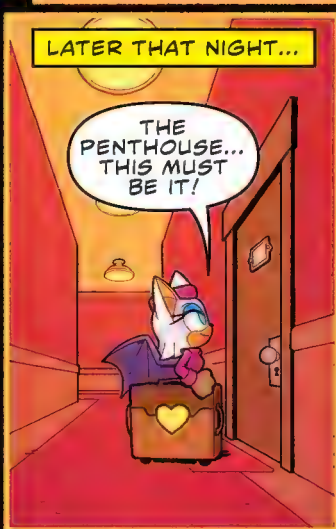
BUT DON'T YOU WORRY YOUR PRETTY HEAD ABOUT IT; I CAN HANDLE MYSELF.



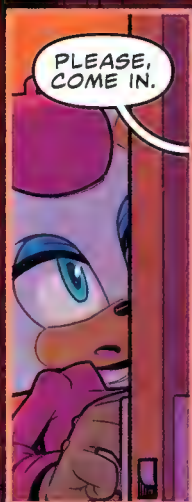
GO AHEAD AND BOOK A ROOM FOR THE NIGHT, AND DON'T WAIT UP.

FINE... BUT ONLY 'CAUSE IT'S PAST CREAM'S BEDTIME.

LATER THAT NIGHT...



THE PENTHOUSE... THIS MUST BE IT!



PLEASE, COME IN.



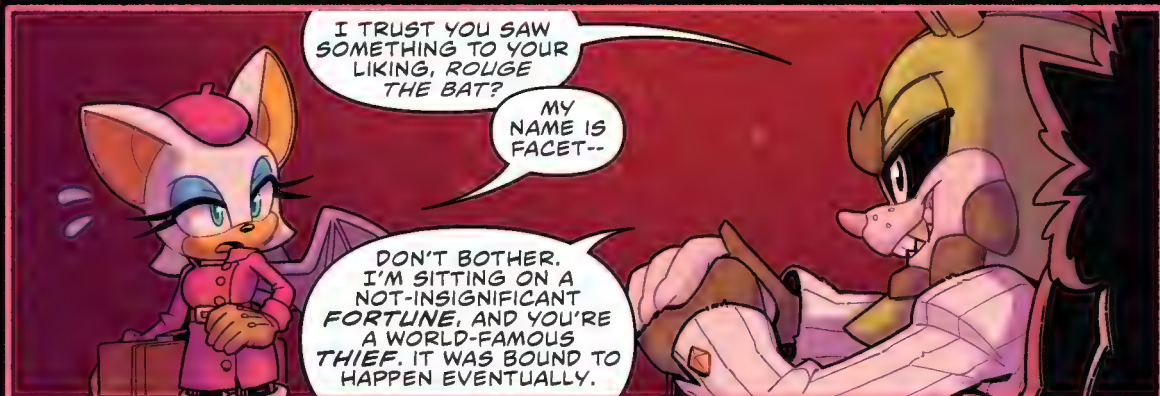
WOOF... HIS HOUSEKEEPING IS ABOUT AS RIGOROUS AS HIS PERSONAL HYGIENE.



THERE IS A CERTAIN CHARM TO IT, THOUGH.



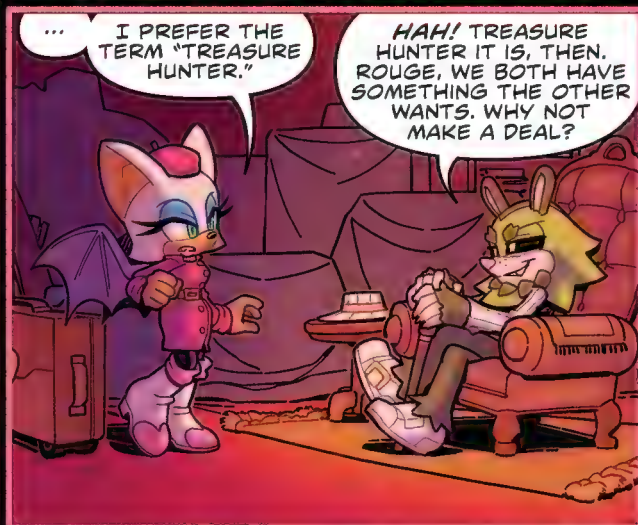
GOOD, YOU FOUND ME... SOME OF MY GUESTS GET A BIT LOST IN THE COLLECTION.



I TRUST YOU SAW SOMETHING TO YOUR LIKING, ROUGE THE BAT?

MY NAME IS FACET--

DON'T BOTHER. I'M SITTING ON A NOT-INSIGNIFICANT FORTUNE, AND YOU'RE A WORLD-FAMOUS THIEF. IT WAS BOUND TO HAPPEN EVENTUALLY.



... I PREFER THE TERM "TREASURE HUNTER."

HAH! TREASURE HUNTER IT IS, THEN. ROUGE, WE BOTH HAVE SOMETHING THE OTHER WANTS. WHY NOT MAKE A DEAL?

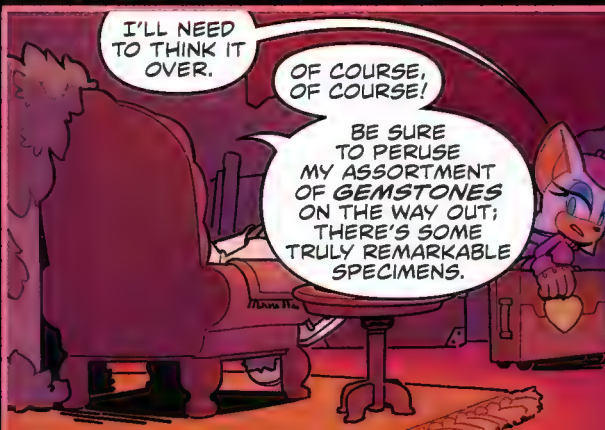


I'M A CHAO TRAINER AND A GOOD ONE. I ONLY WANT THE BEST. AND THAT CHAO YOU WERE RACING TODAY... I COULD MAKE THEM LEGENDARY.

SO HERE'S THE PITCH: IF THAT DIAMOND-IN-THE-ROUGH OF YOURS CAN COME OUT ON TOP IN TOMORROW'S RACES, I'LL GIVE YOU ANYTHING YOU WANT FROM MY COLLECTION... IN TRADE FOR THE CHAO.



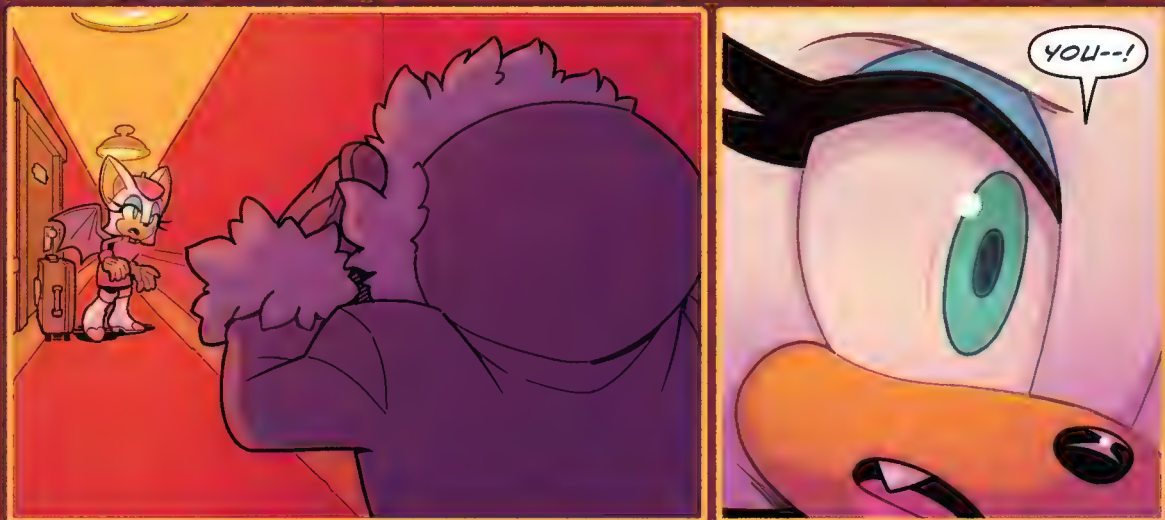
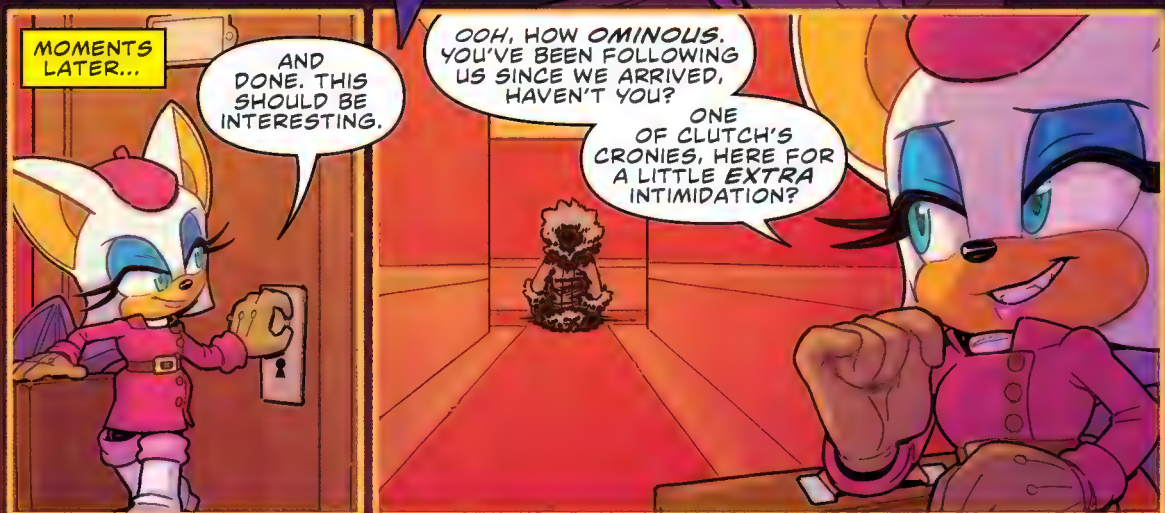
DON'T WORRY, I TREAT MY CHAO QUITE WELL... AS LONG AS THEY'RE WINNING FOR ME.



I'LL NEED TO THINK IT OVER.

OF COURSE, OF COURSE!

BE SURE TO PERUSE MY ASSORTMENT OF GEMSTONES ON THE WAY OUT; THERE'S SOME TRULY REMARKABLE SPECIMENS.



OUTSIDE...

ANOTHER DEAD END... NO SIGN OF THE DOCTOR'S WORK HERE, JUST PETTY GAMES AND FRIVOLOUS AMUSEMENTS. I GUESS THE RUMOR ABOUT A BOT-TRADER HERE WAS FALSE.

WHAT ARE AMY AND ROUGE DOING HERE? WITH CREAM, TOO... I COULD--NO. NOT MY PROBLEM.

THMP
THMP
THMP

?

WHO IS THAT?

MAYBE THERE WAS SOMETHING TO THE RUMORS AFTER ALL...

...YOU!
STOP!

DON'T BOTHER RUNNING, YOU CAN'T ESCAPE ME.





NEXT TIME:
THE RACE IS ON!



NEXT MONTH



SONIC

LETTERS SQUAD

Hey there, Squad! Did you enjoy "Chao Races and Badnik Bases", part 1 by Evan Stanley, Reggie Grabam, and Shawn Lee? We know we did! And we're super excited to have Evan taking over writing duties as well as art on this arc!

As a special treat, Assistant Editor Riley Farmer interviewed series writer/artist Evan Stanley about her start in comics, her process on Sonic, and the future of the series! Check it out below and we'll be back to the usual letters and fan art next issue!

IDW: Hi, Evan! Thanks for sitting down with us for a virtual interview. To get started, how did you first become an illustrator?

Evan Stanley: I've been drawing basically as long as I can remember—my mom really supported that and she put me in art classes. I was trained in scientific illustration from a pretty early age. I thought that I would be a children's book illustrator or a scientific illustrator when I got older, but then, around 12 or 13, we got the internet at our house and my brother and I started playing games. He discovered Sonic and thought he was going to really like it. He bought a bunch of games and was like "Yeah! This is my thing now!" and then tried to play the games and he was like "This isn't my thing!" So I, being 13-years-old, kinda just took it and claimed the games as my own.

I had never played games before, I wasn't very good at it, but what started getting me was—I went online and started reading fan comics and looking at fan art and I got totally hooked on just the fan side of everything. And I started drawing fan art of the characters. The first time I drew fan art, it was Tails specifically, and it's just like, I did it, and I knew this is what I want to do and for as long as I possibly can. And from then on, I started teaching myself cartooning and applying everything that I learned about in formal styles of illustration to what I could do in comics and learning from there. I've just continued to focus my efforts towards how I can be a better cartoonist.

IDW: And then did you just send your portfolio to Archie Comics [the previous publishers of *Sonic the Hedgehog*, where Evan got her start]?

Evan: Actually, no. I was—I think—around 17, and I'd been reading Archie's *Sonic the Hedgehog* for a couple of years. It was my favorite comic, and they held a fan art contest, and I entered the fan art contest. You know, just for fun. I didn't think anything would happen with it, and I forgot about it, and then a few weeks after that, I got an email from the editor of the book at the time and he's like "Hey, I really liked your submissions, would you like to do some freelance work with us?" So I didn't win the competition, but I think I won a greater reward.

IDW: What's your favorite part of the creating comics?

Evan: The part that gets me the most excited is actually the pitching process. When we're coming up with all these—the craziest ideas we can come up with and trying to throw them all together and get everything to mesh and that kind of big picture plot planning where you get to see the scope of the story, that's the exciting part for me. That's not to discount everything else. I love every part of the process. I wouldn't be here if I didn't.

IDW: What do you use to draw and write the comics?

Evan: To draw the comics, first, I draw in just my regular sketchbook and then I do everything else in Photoshop using one of the big Wacom Cintiqs. For writing so far, I write it all down in a notebook and then I've been using Google Docs, but I think I'm gonna have to switch to something better.

IDW: Where do you get your ideas?

Evan: The ideas come from lots of different places. Part of it is, specifically for *Sonic*, because it is a continuing series that I'm jumping on to that has a lot of history behind

it and a lot of things to draw from, I'm often looking at "Okay, what have we got so far? What is a new angle we haven't explored yet? And what is a piece of older lore from the larger series that hasn't been explored recently?" So those are things that I look at a lot to kind of find a new angle that isn't already in place or planning to be explored and then kind of divide that by my personal interests. So it's like "What do I like to write about, and what things outside of Sonic interest me?"

Like, with Chao Races and Badnik Bases (CRAAB), that story takes place in a big, old rustic lodge in the mountains and that's an environment that I find really aesthetically pleasing and interesting. So I wanted to draw on something like that as well as future stories, that're going to be pulling in from other stories that have inspired me as well as weird old parts of Sonic that haven't been touched in a long time.

IDW: How do you create a new character?

Evan: It's pretty similar to how I think about new plot lines. "What is a character archetype or combination that we haven't seen before?" and combine that with "What is a character type that could help flesh out the cast to tell new stories?" So for character concept, that's where I go.

For designing, I try to stick more to what is previously established in Sonic to guarantee that it will be something that kinda vibes with the current aesthetic. And then I start with "Okay, this is a base of something that I know all of these design elements are basically accepted, allowed, and established." And then I make up one or two new things to mix in to make the character feel like a new character and not just a remix of everything else. And all of that is chosen to serve whatever the character prompt is. How can I use these design elements to illustrate who this character is and what they're about?

IDW: With so many cool characters in Sonic's world, how'd you decide on this cast for CRAAB?

Evan: Part of it was just, I really like Rouge the Bat. I think she's super cool. And I've just wanted to write and draw a story about her for a long time. And combined with that is in

the last arc, we really got to see Cream and Cheese and Gemerl come into their own as characters in the book and I wanted to keep that momentum going. For Amy's case, she really hasn't gotten to do much for a while, and it's like, she's one of the main four lead characters and it's about time she got some solid attention. So that was a good fit for her. And of course, this is like starting a new season of the book, and I want to start that with a strong focus on Sonic and Tails because they are core characters. So they get to have a big part in the story as well.

IDW: What does your ideal Chao look like?

Evan: I made my ideal in *Sonic Adventure 2* and I love him very much. His name is Loose. He is a run-fly, dark Chao, with a ghost tail and yellow and teal stripes.

IDW: The Metal Virus Saga (issues #13-32) was this big, often dark story that really took Sonic and his friends to their limits. It seems like some shady stuff's going on at White Park, but how do you plan on keeping Sonic and the gang challenged?

IDW: Not every conflict has to be based on power. The challenges they're going to be facing are more based on the dynamics of the environment, be that natural or social, which changes how they find viable solutions.

IDW: And finally, do you have any Sonic Secrets you can share?

Evan: I've been tinkering with a new character!

Thanks for talking with us, Evan! And hope you readers enjoyed learning more about how comics get made! As always, don't forget to send your art and letters to letters@idwpublishing.com, and make sure to mark them: "OKAY TO PRINT!" And join the IDW Sonic Comics Squad on Facebook! We'll see you here next month for Chao racing action and a whole lot more (maybe that new character?) in Sonic #34, CRAAB part 2!



ART EVAN STANLEY



ART GIGI DUTREIX COLORS REGGIE GRAHAM



ART NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

IDW

1

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THE HEDGEHOG

BAD GUY'S



FREE DIGITAL ASHCAN

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.....

SONIC™

THE HEDGEHOG

BAD GUYS

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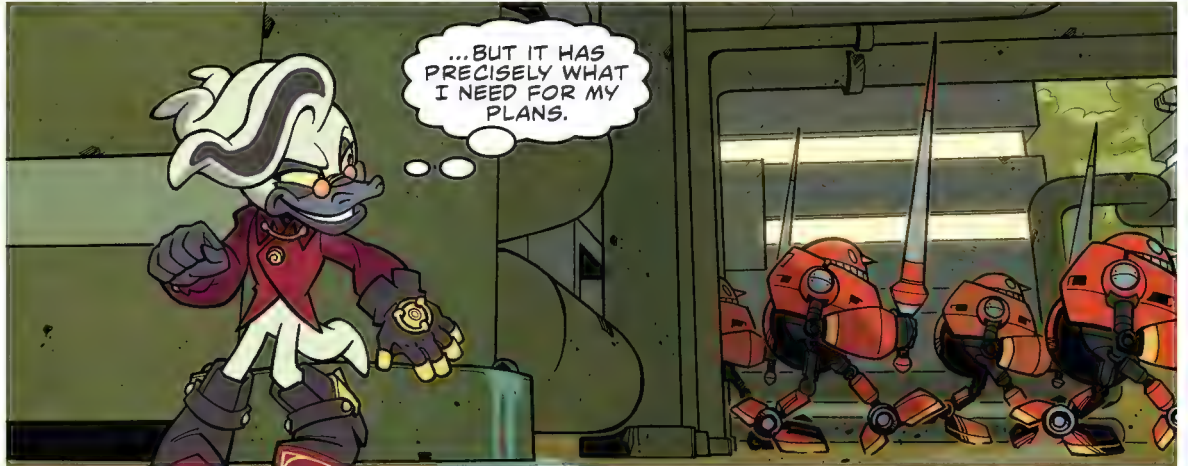
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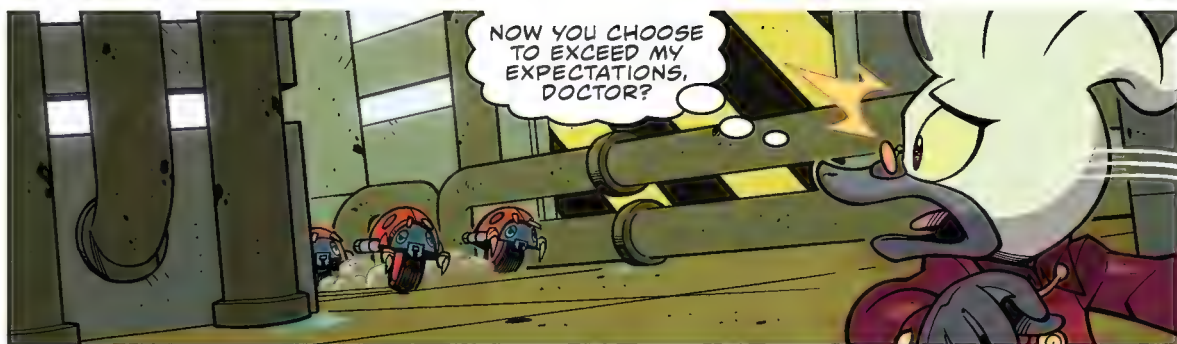


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EGG BASE SIGMA...

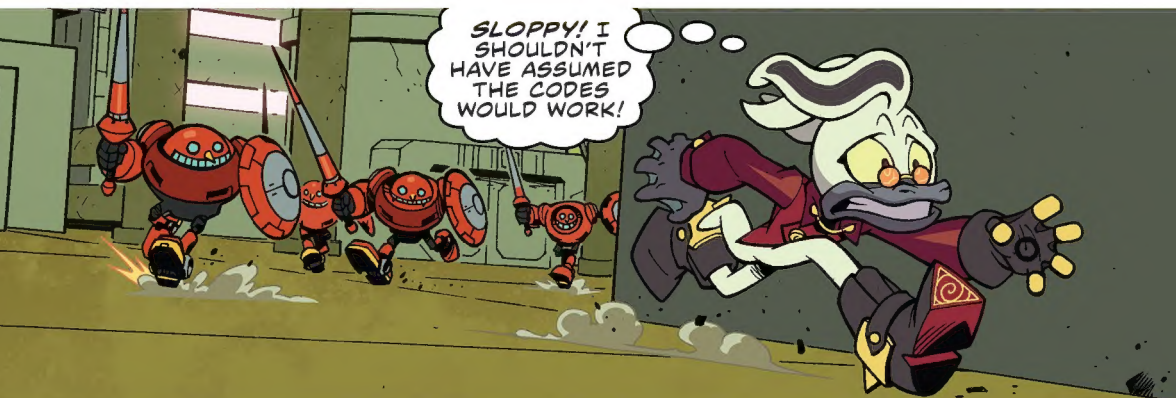
...A MODEST INDUSTRIAL SITE BY THE EGGMAN EMPIRE'S STANDARDS...



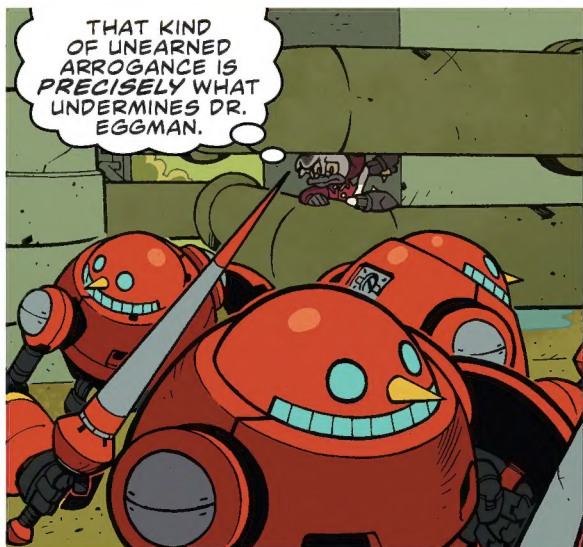




...AND
DEFINITELY
NOT THE TIME
TO STRESS
TEST THEM!



SLOPPY! I
SHOULDN'T
HAVE ASSUMED
THE CODES
WOULD WORK!



THAT KIND
OF UNEARNED
ARROGANCE IS
PRECISELY WHAT
UNDERMINES DR.
EGGMAN.

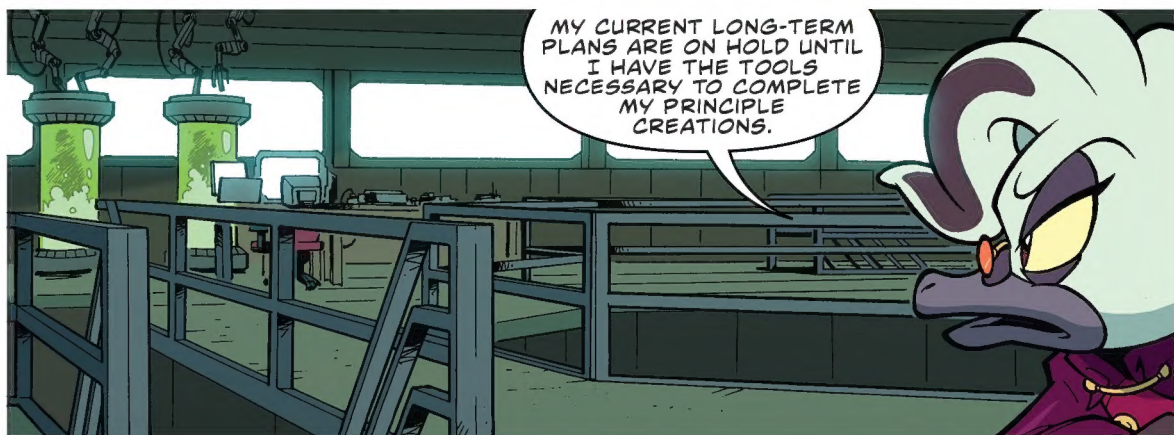


I MUST
BE BETTER
THAN MY
IDOL.



BUT
FIRST, FOCUS
ON SOLVING THE
PROBLEM AT HAND.
ESCAPE. QUICKLY.
QUIETLY.

AVOID
FIGHTING
AS MUCH AS
POSSIBLE...





IDW

1

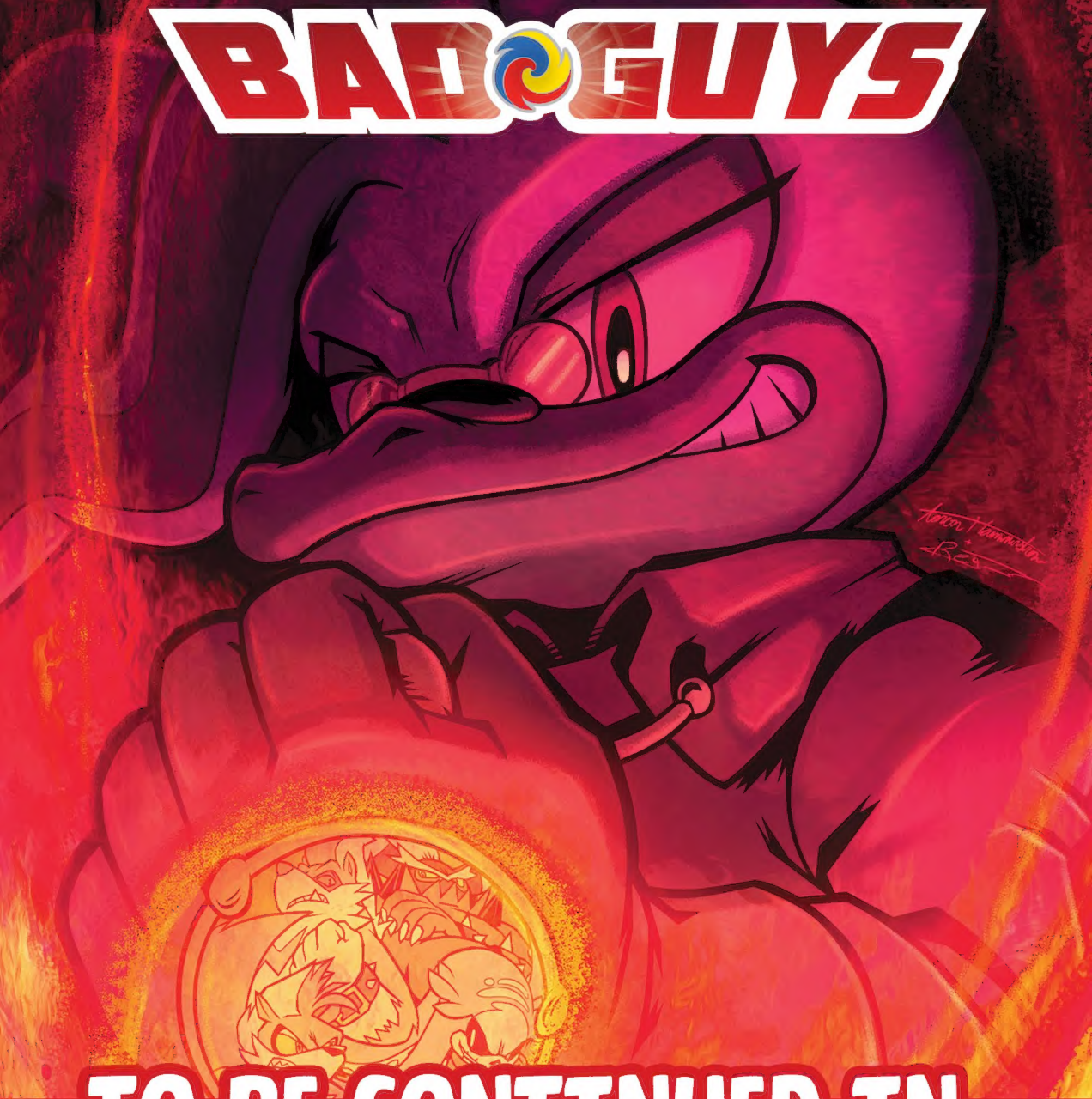
COVER A

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BAD GUYS



TO BE CONTINUED IN...

SONIC: BAD GUYS #1

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